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Public Comment

I oppose this testing proposal that DEC is considering inflicting upon farmers and ranchers in Alaska for all incoming sheep and goats in Alaska.

Wildlife Authorities and Livestock Authorities oppose this proposal as well. It is not supported by scientific evidence to slow, stop or hinder in any way the spread or transmission of M. Ovi.

This testing proposal does not have any hope of keeping M. Ovi. out of the wild herds of Dall Sheep and Mountain Goats in Alaska. M. Ovi. is a naturally occurring pathogen in wild sheep and goats along with domestic sheep and goats. The naturally occurring percentage, is something like 2% +/- and is not significantly different in wild or domestic herds.

The transmission of M. Ovi. from domestic to wild or wild to domestic sheep and goats has NEVER been documented. Domestic sheep and goats have NO opportunity to interact with wild sheep and goats to transmit the pathogen to or from a wild sheep, goat, caribou or moose. Requiring testing of domestic sheep and goats is simply wrong, and over burdensome to the domestic side.

M. Ovi. has been documented in caribou and Moose along with wild sheep and goats. It is unreasonable to test all wild animals and then determine what can be done to that positive wild animal anyway. Those wild animals that have been proved positive with M. Ovi. were not discarded by the conservationist.

What has the Wild Sheep Federation done to stop the spread of M. Ovi. to wild animals? Nothing. Has the Wild Sheep Foundation offered to pay for any and all testing? Not that I am aware of. Not only the testing, but the labor required to collect the blood samples, pay for freight costs, the lab tests and distribute the testing results back to the producers? No.

Please remind the Wild Sheep Federation to take responsibility upon themselves rather than blame and require someone else to incur unnecessary costs and efforts.

Sincerely,



Bryan J. Scoresby

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